

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. **(Previously Presented)** A method, comprising:

receiving at a centralized alert center, a user-submitted indication of an alert source from which a user desires to receive alerts, wherein:

the centralized alert center is not directly associated with the alert source;

and

the alert source is configured to enable users to subscribe directly to the alert source;

subscribing, by the centralized alert center, on behalf of the user, to the alert source, such that alerts for the user are sent by the alert source to the centralized alert center rather than to the user;

receiving at the centralized alert center, on behalf of the user, an alert for the user, and on behalf of the user, from the alert source;

mapping the alert that was received to a delivery mode; and

based on the mapping, forwarding the same alert that was received to the user according to the delivery mode.

2. **(Previously Presented)** The method as recited in claim 1, wherein mapping the alert that was received to a delivery mode comprises mapping the alert according to the alert source.

3. **(Previously Presented)** The method as recited in claim 1, wherein mapping the alert that was received to the delivery mode comprises mapping the alert according to content of the alert.

4. **(Previously Presented)** The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the delivery mode specifies a delivery method used to forward the same alert that was received to the user, and wherein forwarding the same alert that was received to the user according to the delivery mode comprises transmitting the same alert that was received to the user via the delivery method indicated in the delivery mode.

5. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the delivery mode specifies a delivery action that indicates a delivery method to be used to forward the same alert that was received and whether an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should~~ be is expected, and the method further comprises waiting for an acknowledgement to the alert if the delivery mode indicates that an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should be~~ is expected.

6. **(Original)** The method as recited in claim 5, wherein the delivery action specifies a time period to wait for an acknowledgement if an acknowledgement to the alert is expected, and wherein the waiting further comprises waiting the specified time period for an acknowledgement to the alert.

7. **(Previously Presented)** The method as recited in claim 1, wherein:

the delivery mode specifies a first delivery method used to forward the same alert that was received;

the delivery mode specifies a second delivery method used to forward the same alert that as received;

the second delivery method is different than the first delivery method; and

forwarding the same alert that was received comprises transmitting the same alert that was received to the user via the first delivery method and the second delivery method as indicated by the delivery mode.

8. **(Previously Presented)** The method as recited in claim 1, wherein mapping the alert that was received to a delivery mode comprises:

defining one or more categories of alerts;

assigning a delivery mode to each category; and

categorizing the alert, thereby mapping the alert to the delivery mode of the category.

9. **(Previously Presented)** The method as recited in claim 8, wherein mapping the alert that was received to a delivery mode further comprising assigning a priority to each category, and wherein assigning a delivery mode to each category comprises assigning a delivery mode to a category based on the priority assigned to the category.

10. **(Previously Presented)** The method as recited in claim 1, wherein:

mapping the alert that was received to the delivery mode comprises:

mapping the alert that was received to a primary delivery block specifying a first delivery action that specifies a first delivery method, and a secondary delivery block specifying a second delivery action that specifies a second delivery method, wherein the second delivery method is not the same as the first delivery method; and

forwarding the alert that was received to the user according to the delivery mode comprises:

transmitting the alert that was received to the user according to the first delivery action;

if transmitting the alert that was received to the user according to the first delivery action is successful, preventing the alert that was received from being transmitted to the user according to the second delivery action; and

if transmitting the alert that was received to the user according to the first delivery action is unsuccessful, transmitting the alert that was received to the user according to the second delivery action.

11. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the first and second delivery actions each further specify whether an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should be~~ is expected, and the method further comprises:

waiting for an acknowledgement to the transmission of the alert according to the first delivery action if the first delivery action specifies that an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should be~~ is expected; and

waiting for an acknowledgement to the transmission of the alert according to the second delivery action if the second delivery action specifies that an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should be~~ is expected, provided the alert is transmitted according to the secondary delivery action.

12. **(Previously Presented)** The method as recited in claim 10, wherein:

the first delivery action further specifies a third delivery method, wherein the third delivery method is not the same as the first delivery method; and

if transmitting the alert that was received to the user according to the first delivery action is unsuccessful, transmitting the alert that was received to the user according to the second delivery action comprises determining that transmitting the alert that was received to the user according to the first delivery action is unsuccessful if either the first delivery method or the third delivery method indicated in the first delivery action fails to result in transmission of the alert that was received to the user.

13. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 10, wherein:

each of the first and second delivery actions further specifies:

whether an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should be~~ is expected; and

a time period to wait for an acknowledgement if an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should be~~ is expected; and

the method further comprises:

waiting for an acknowledgement to the transmission of the alert according to the first delivery action if the first delivery action indicates that an acknowledgement to the alert is expected; and

waiting for an acknowledgement to the transmission of the alert according to the second delivery action if the second delivery action indicates that an acknowledgement to the alert is expected, provided that the alert was transmitted according to the secondary delivery action.

14. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the primary delivery block and the secondary delivery block each specify a first delivery action that indicates a first delivery method to be used to deliver the alert and whether an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should be~~ is expected, and a second delivery action that indicates a second delivery method, which is different than the first delivery method, to be used to deliver the alert and whether an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should be~~ is expected, the method further comprising:

waiting for an acknowledgement to the transmission of the alert according to each delivery action of the primary delivery block that indicates that an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should be~~ is expected; and

waiting for an acknowledgement to the transmission of the alert according to each delivery action of the secondary delivery block that indicates that an acknowledgement to the alert ~~should be~~ is expected, provided the alert is transmitted according to the delivery actions of the secondary delivery block.

15. **(Original)** The method as recited in claim 14, wherein each delivery action that indicates to wait for an acknowledgement specifies a time period to wait for an acknowledgement, and wherein waiting for an acknowledgement further comprises waiting the specified time period for an acknowledgement.

16. **(Previously Presented)** A centralized alert delivery system, comprising:
an input/output (I/O) module configured to receive alerts from multiple alert sources, wherein:

each of the multiple alert sources is configured to enable users to subscribe to receive alerts directly from the alert source; and

the centralized alert delivery system is configured as an intermediary that enables a user to direct the centralized alert delivery system to subscribe to receive alerts directly from the multiple alert sources on behalf of the user, thereby enabling the user to receive alerts from the alert source without providing any user contact information to the alert source;

a mapping module configured to map an alert received on behalf of a user from one of the multiple alert sources to a delivery mode; and

a communications layer that interfaces to one or more communications modules, the communications layer being configured to receive the mapped alert and deliver the alert to the user via a communications module according to the delivery mode associated with the alert.

17. **(Original)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 16, wherein the mapping module is further configured to map the alert according to the source of the alert.

18. **(Previously Presented)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 16, wherein the alert comprises content, and wherein the mapping module is further configured to map the alert according to the content of the alert.

19. **(Previously Presented)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 16, wherein the delivery mode specifies a delivery action that indicates a delivery method by which an alert mapped to the delivery mode is transmitted.

20. **(Previously Presented)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 19, wherein the delivery method is chosen from a group of delivery methods consisting of: e-mail, instant messaging, SMS (short message service) messaging.

21. **(Previously Presented)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 16, wherein the delivery mode comprises one or more delivery blocks, each delivery block specifying one or more delivery actions, each delivery action specifying:

a delivery method by which an alert associated with the delivery mode is delivered;

whether an acknowledgement to the alert is expected; and

if an acknowledgement to the alert is expected, a time to wait for the acknowledgement.

22. **(Previously Presented)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 16, wherein the delivery mode comprises one or more delivery blocks, each delivery block specifying one or more delivery actions, each delivery action specifying a delivery method by which the associated alert is delivered and whether an acknowledgement to the transmitted alert is expected.

23. **(Original)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 22, wherein each delivery action that indicates an acknowledgement is expected further specifies a time to wait for the acknowledgement.

24. **(Previously Presented)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 16, wherein:

the delivery mode comprises a primary delivery block and a secondary delivery block; and

the communications layer is further configured to:

deliver the alert to the user via the one or more communications modules according to a delivery method specified in the primary delivery block;

if delivery according to the primary delivery block fails, deliver the alert according to a delivery method specified in the secondary delivery block; and

if delivery according to the primary delivery block succeeds, preventing the alert from being delivered according to the delivery method specified in the secondary delivery block.

25. **(Previously Presented)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 16, wherein:

the delivery mode comprises a primary delivery block that includes a first delivery action that specifies a first delivery method and a second delivery action that specifies a second delivery method, wherein the second delivery method is different than the first delivery method; and

the communications layer is further configured to deliver the alert via the one or more communications modules according to the first delivery method specified in the first delivery action and according to the second delivery method specified in the second delivery action.

26. **(Previously Presented)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 25, wherein:

the delivery mode further comprises a secondary delivery block; and

the communications layer is further configured to:

deliver the alert via the one or more communications modules according to a delivery method specified in the secondary delivery block if the delivery of the alert according to either the first delivery action or the second delivery action in the primary delivery block fails; and

prevent delivery of the alert via the one or more communications modules according to a delivery method specified in the secondary delivery block if the delivery of the alert according to the primary delivery block succeeds.

27. **(Currently Amended)** The centralized alert delivery system as recited in claim 16, further comprising:

a categories module that identifies categories into which ~~an alert may be~~ alerts are categorized, wherein each category has an associated delivery mode; and

the mapping module is further configured to categorize the alert into a category identified in the categories module thereby associating the alert with the delivery mode of the category.

28. **(Currently Amended)** A computer system, comprising:

a processor;

an I/O module;

memory; and

an alert center stored in the memory, the alert center including:

a subscription layer configured to:

receive a request from a user to subscribe to a particular alert source on behalf of the user, wherein the alert source is not directly affiliated with the alert center;

subscribe to the particular alert source on behalf of the user;

receive an alert from the alert ~~source and~~ source; and

assign a delivery mode to the alert; and

a communications layer configured to transmit the same alert that was received to the user according to a delivery mode assigned to the alert.

29. **(Original)** The computer system as recited in claim 28, wherein the alert center is further configured to monitor for an acknowledgement that the alert was successfully delivered.

30. **(Previously Presented)** The computer system as recited in claim 28, wherein the alert center is further configured to monitor for an acknowledgement that the alert was successfully delivered according to a first delivery method associated with the delivery mode and, if an acknowledgment is not received within a specified time period, assign a backup delivery method to the alert and attempt to deliver the alert according to the backup delivery method, wherein the backup delivery method is different than the first delivery method.

31. **(Original)** The computer system as recited in claim 28, wherein:
the delivery mode further comprises a primary delivery block having a first delivery action and a second delivery action; and
the communications layer is further configured to transmit the alert according to the first delivery action and the second delivery action of the primary delivery block.

32. **(Previously Presented)** The computer system as recited in claim 28, wherein:

the delivery mode further comprises a primary delivery block having a delivery action and a secondary delivery block having a delivery action; and

the communications layer is further configured to transmit the alert according to the delivery action of the primary delivery block and, if delivery of the alert according to the primary delivery block fails, to transmit the alert according to the delivery action of the secondary delivery block.

33. **(Previously Presented)** The computer system as recited in claim 31, wherein:

the first delivery action and the second delivery action further comprise a time to wait for an acknowledgement that the alert was received; and

the communications layer is further configured to transmit the alert according to the delivery action of the secondary delivery block if an acknowledgement to the transmission of the alert according to the first delivery action or the second delivery action of the primary delivery block is not received within the time to wait identified by the first delivery action and the second delivery action, respectively.

34. **(Currently Amended)** The computer system as recited in claim 28, wherein:
the subscription layer comprises:

a categories module that includes one or more categories into which an alert may be alerts are categorized, each category having a delivery mode associated therewith; and

a mapping module configured to categorize an alert received from an alert source, thereby associating the delivery mode of the category with the alert.

35. **(Currently Amended)** One or more computer storage media containing computer-executable instructions that, when executed on a computer, direct the computer to perform a method comprising:

subscribing to an alert source on behalf of a user, wherein the alert source is configured to enable users to subscribe to receive alerts directly from the alert source;

receiving, on behalf of the user, an alert from the alert source;

determining a delivery mode which specifies a delivery method ~~by which for~~ delivering the alert ~~should be forwarded~~ to the user; and

transmitting the same alert that was received to the user according to the delivery mode.

36. **(Previously Presented)** The one or more computer storage media as recited in claim 35, wherein determining the delivery mode comprises:

- determining the alert source from which the alert originated;
- identifying a category associated with the alert source; and
- identifying a delivery mode associated with the category.

37. **(Previously Presented)** The one or more computer storage media as recited in claim 35, wherein transmitting the alert according to the delivery mode comprises:

- identifying a delivery action associated with the delivery mode; and
- transmitting the alert according to the delivery action.

38. **(Previously Presented)** The one or more computer storage media as recited in claim 35, wherein transmitting the alert according to the delivery mode comprises:

- identifying a first delivery action associated with the delivery mode;
- identifying a second delivery action associated with the delivery mode; and
- transmitting the alert according to the first delivery action and the second delivery action.

39. **(Previously Presented)** The one or more computer storage media as recited in claim 35, wherein:

the delivery mode comprises a primary delivery block that specifies one or more delivery actions, and a secondary delivery block that specifies one or more delivery actions; and

transmitting the alert to the user according to the delivery mode comprises transmitting the alert to the user according to the delivery action of the primary delivery block and, if the transmission according to the delivery action of the primary delivery block fails, transmitting the alert to the user according to the delivery action of the secondary delivery block.

40. **(Previously Presented)** The one or more computer storage media as recited in claim 39, wherein:

the primary delivery block comprises first and second delivery actions; and

the transmission of the alert according to the primary delivery block is deemed to fail if the transmission of the alert according to the first or second delivery actions fails.

41. **(Previously Presented)** The one or more computer storage media as recited in claim 39, wherein:

the primary delivery block comprises first and second delivery actions; and

the transmission of the alert according to the primary delivery block is deemed to fail if the transmission of the alert according to both the first and second delivery actions fails.

42. **(Previously Presented)** The one or more computer storage media as recited in claim 35, wherein the method further comprises monitoring for an acknowledgement that the alert was successfully received by the user.